

# JAPAN CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY NEWS

Chairman :

Tsunetaro Miyakoda

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Editors:

Kaname Tsukahara

*of the National Christian Council of Japan*

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## CENTENNIAL PLANS

Full cooperation in commemorating the Protestant Centennial in 1959 appears to be more hopeful as the eventful year approaches. On February 15 at a meeting of representatives of both National Christian Council-affiliated and non-affiliated denominations at the Ginza Christian Center it was decided to hold semi-annual conferences to promote evangelism and make more detailed plans. In addition to representatives of the United Church, Episcopal Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church and the Baptist Convention, which are affiliated with the National Christian Council, representatives of the Holiness Church, Salvation Army, Spirit of Jesus Church, Seventh Day Adventist and four other denominations were present.







## SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY OF CHURCHES

Upon request of the Committee on Social Relations of the World Council of Churches, the National Christian Council has been conducting studies in "The Churches' Responsibilities in Radically Changing Communities." Participating in the studies are Professor Ryoaburo Minami of Chuo University, who has prepared a report on the population question, and Professor Eiichi Isomura of Tokyo Metropolitan University, who has made an analysis of the problem of poverty. Land reform, medium and small business enterprises, and Christian industry are being studied by the United Church's Institute on Mission. Some reports have been criticized as scholastically good but lacking in Christian insight. The Reverend Kiyoshi Hirai will represent Japan at a conference on Christian social responsibilities at the Menosen University, Indonesia, March 12-16, which is being sponsored by the World Council of Churches.

## WCTU REHABILITATION CENTERS

The Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) is projecting an extensive rehabilitation program to be inaugurated in connection with the enforcement of the Anti-Prostitution Law which was passed by the Diet in 1956. At present there are rehabilitation centers in only Tokyo, Osaka and Kobe but ten more are to be established as soon as funds are available. This fall the Union plans to begin construction of a four-storey ferro-concrete building which will provide headquarters offices and a public auditorium and a three storey rehabilitation center near the Okubo Station in Tokyo. To aid in this project a Sponsors Association has been formed to raise thirty million yen from the general public. The following prominent citizens have agreed to act in this capacity: Dr. Shinzo Koizumi, former President of Keio Gijuku University, Aichiro Fujiyama, President of the Japan Chamber of Commerce, Dr. Yoshishige Abe, President of Gakushuin University (formerly known as the Peers School) and Honorable Hisato Ichimada, former Minister of Finance and prominent financier.

## DR. STANLEY JONES MEETINGS

Dr. Jones is having unusually successful meetings on his fifth tour of Japan since the end of the war. Enthusiasm among the churches appears to be greater and the response to his message is most encouraging. The largest meeting in recent weeks was held at Yokosuka where 2,000 were present and 555 decision cards were signed. In Yokohama the Shiro Church was packed and 323 decisions recorded. On one day in Shizuoka the total attendance at four meetings was 2,400. Even in the small city of Kakegawa near Nagoya, where a generally conservative atmosphere and morally low atmosphere prevails, the community extended a warm welcome, provided a lunch prepared by the students, and made the school auditorium available for meetings. An examination of the cards received indicates that about two-thirds are re-dedications and one-third first commitments. The Amagisan-so Ashram, (February 19-22), was attended by 180 clergy and laymen and is reported to have been very successful. One feature was a forty-eight hour vigil of prayer at which those present took an hour period each in a room set aside for this purpose.







## RELIGIOUS JURIDICAL PERSONS LAW

The Religions League of Japan met at the Christian Center on February 9 to discuss revision of the Religious Juridical Persons Law which is now under consideration by the Religious Juridical Persons Advisory Council of the Ministry of Education. According to the Reverend Keitaro Nishimura, Chairman of the Executive Committee, the League is opposed to suggested amendments which will strengthen the authority of the Government in regard to authorizing incorporation, investigating religious organizations, and dissolution. "The Religions League" states Mr. Nishimura, is of the opinion that the present law had better be observed." On February 26, the Christian Liaison Committee, which is composed of representatives of the Catholic Church, United Church, Episcopal Church, Orthodox Church met at the Christian Center to further discuss its attitude toward the proposed revision.

[The Christian Liaison Committee is a continuation of an organization set up during the war but at that time it was composed of only the United Church and Catholic Church. The Committee is a constituent member of the Religions League of Japan with which the All Japan Buddhist Federation, the Sectarian Shinto Federation, the Shrine Association and the Union of the New Religious Organizations of Japan are also affiliated. The League, therefore, represents more than ninety-five percent of all organized religion in Japan. The Reverend Keitaro Nishimura, of the Episcopal Church is currently Chairman of the League's Executive Committee.]

## UNITED CHURCH-TOKYO DISTRICT ANNUAL MEETING

The Tokyo District of the United Church of Christ will hold its tenth annual meeting at the Shinanomachi Church on March 7-8. In addition to the election of officers, the budget, and other routine business, the delegates are expected to discuss adoption of a "larger parish system". The present 352 churches and preaching centers in the district (about 1% of the United Church) are divided into thirteen sub-divisions, ten of which are in the Tokyo metropolitan area and three in Chiba and Kanagawa prefectures. The present plan is to reduce the number of sub-divisions to eight and strengthen their organization. If this is done, all but one sub-division or "larger parish" will have more churches and preaching centers than all Hokkaido which has only 42.

## ATOMIC BOMBING VICTIMS

In order to secure first-hand information on the condition of atomic bomb victims in the Nagasaki and Hiroshima area, the Reverend Samuel Franklin of Tokyo Union Theological Seminary, the Reverend Kanichi Nishimura, a member of the Social Problems Committee of National Christian Council, the Reverend Yoriichi Manabe and Mr. Kentaro Buma, chairman and associate director respectively of Japan Church World Service recently visited Hiroshima and Nagasaki to survey the needs of the victims. There is considerable interest abroad in aiding these people so the on-the-spot survey, for which special funds were made available, was considered necessary.







BRIEF

Dr. Marshall Scott, well known Presbyterian minister and authority in occupational evangelism, is due in Japan March 2 for a visit of approximately six weeks.

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Dr. Richard Raines, Bishop of the Methodist Church in Indonesia, will arrive in Japan on March 13. During the following week Bishop Raines will visit Osaka, Kyoto, Nara, Hiroshima and Nagasaki and on March 22 fly to Korea. He expects to return to the USA on April 10. A reception will be held for Bishop Raines on March 14.

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A mass evangelism conference for workers in Tokyo District churches of the United Church of Christ will be held at the Fujimicho Church on the evenings of March 11 and 12. Discussions will cover such subjects as public question meetings, tent evangelism, audio-visual aids, street preaching, mass evangelism and the church, and the theological approach.

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Dr. T. T. Brumbaugh, Secretary of the Division of Foreign Missions of the Methodist Church in America, and Mrs. Brumbaugh are in the Far East on an extended tour of Japan, Korea and Okinawa. After visiting Korea and Okinawa Dr. Brumbaugh will return to Tokyo in time for the annual meeting of the National Christian Council (March 5-6) and the International Christian University Commencement (March 21). During the following four months the Brumbaughs will make a careful study of educational institutions in Japan.

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Dr. and Mrs. Darley Downs, Secretary of the Interboard Field Committee, are leaving on furlough early in April. During Dr. Downs' absence, the Reverend Charles H. Germany will be secretary.

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Professor Michio Takaya of Meiji Gakuin University recently addressed the members of the Christian Writers Association on "Source Materials for Protestant History in Japan." Mr. Susumu Ejiri of the Japan Newspaper Association spoke on "Journalism in Western Europe."

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Dr. Donald Soper, Moderator of the Methodist Church in England, will visit Japan for three weeks in October enroute to Canada. A prominent evangelist, writer, and administrator, Dr. Soper is noted especially for his vigorous opposition to communism. His visit is sponsored by the National Christian Council as a part of the Protestant Centennial.



